

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims as follows:

**1.-19. (CANCELED)**

**20. (CURRENTLY AMENDED)** An alloy comprising ~~consisting~~  
~~essentially of:~~ from 93.5 wt% to 95.5 wt% of silver Ag, from 1.0  
wt% to 2 wt% of germanium Ge, 1-40 ppm of boron B, optionally  
0.5 wt % of any of zinc, cadmium and tin Zn, Cd, and Sn, and  
optionally 0.1-1 wt% of silicon Si, and the remainder, apart  
from impurities, being copper, wherein a weight ratio of copper  
to germanium is from 4:1 to 3:1, and the alloy being resistant  
to the development of ~~porosity~~ porosity and brittleness, the  
development of hot short defects when investment cast, the  
development of cracks or shattering on annealing and quenching  
and the development of cracks and sagging when heated for  
joining or torch annealing,

wherein if said weight ratio of copper to germanium is  
above 4:1 a firestain resistance of said alloy abruptly  
decreases, and if said weight ratio of copper to germanium is  
below 3:1 a high germanium content abruptly increases  
formability problems of said alloy.

**21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED)** The alloy of claim 20, wherein the  
weight ratio of copper to germanium ~~Cu to Ge~~ is about 3.5:1.

**22. (CURRENTLY AMENDED)** The alloy of claim 20, containing from  
1.0 wt% to 1.5 wt% of germanium Ge.

23. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The alloy of claim 22, containing about 94.5 wt% of silver Ag, about 4.3 wt% of copper Cu, and about 1.2 wt% of germanium Ge.

24. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The alloy of claim 20, containing 5-20 ppm of boron.

25. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A finished or semi-finished shaped article of the alloy of claim 20.

26. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 25, which is a casting.

27. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 25, which is at least partly produced from sheet or strip.

28. - 31. (CANCELED)

32. (New) The alloy of claim 20, wherein below 93.5 wt% of silver a thermal stability of said alloy abruptly decreases, and above 95.5 wt% of silver a firestain resistance of said alloy abruptly decreases.

33. (New) The alloy of claim 20, wherein said alloy is produced using continuous casting.